

# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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## The Eighth Congress of the U.S.S.R. Trade Unions

**T**HE congresses of the Soviet trade unions are of great importance not only to the working class of the Soviet Union, but also to the entire international proletariat. These are the only trade unions in the world which, besides representing the great majority of the workers and employees, also organise them; which, besides considering questions, also decide them, and then themselves put the decisions into force.

The colossal difference between the trade unions of capitalist countries and those of the country of the proletarian dictatorship is particularly noticeable at the congresses of the Soviet trade unions. In the capitalist countries the trade unions may come to decisions, but the power and the basic resources are in the hands of the bourgeoisie, so that the putting of any decision into force is associated with a prolonged struggle. In the U.S.S.R. the working class which created the trade unions holds the power in its own hands and

so the decisions adopted are put into force through all the existing State organs with the active participation of the trade unions. A congress of Soviet trade unions is a congress of the masters of the country, inasmuch as they organise ninety per cent. of the workers and employees. Their congresses represent the class which holds the power. After the Soviets, which organise the basic mass of the peasantry, as well as the working class, the trade unions are the largest mass organisations in the U.S.S.R.; and so the voice of eleven millions echo very loudly and convincingly in Soviet Russia, and the great masses of the population give ear to the decisions of the congresses.

**T**HE eighth congress was in session from December 10th to 24th, and in the course of these two weeks it considered all questions of interest to the working class of the Soviet Union. In the reports and discussions



some purely trade union matters were dealt with, and in addition absolutely all the questions of the further growth and development of the land of proletarian dictatorship. This included the problem of the rate of industrialisation in the U.S.S.R., the problem of the formation and development of heavy industry, the problem of the ways and means of reconstructing agriculture, of the co-operating between the toilers of the town and the country, of labour, social insurance, the cultural revolution; further, the problems concerned with the life and existence of the workers, the problems of wages and housing conditions, the problem of the U.S.S.R.'s international situation—all these matters as well comprise the external policy of the Soviet trade union movement itself.

Looking through the reports, discussions and resolutions adopted, we see that everyone of the questions which in one form or another interest the Soviet working class found their expression at the congress. The delegates revealed how high is the level of the lower and the middle trade union worker and active unionist from the factory. In this regard the congress is of enormous interest to the international proletariat.

THE special feature of this congress lay in the fact that its proceedings took place under the sign of a ruthless self-criticism. The delegates dragged to the platform all the errors, weaknesses and defects of the Soviet machinery, of the economic organs and the Soviet trade union movement. The inhabitants of Europe (those from the camp of the bourgeoisie and social-reformism) sincerely believe that it is impossible to hear a single word of criticism in Soviet Russia, that free speech is suppressed there, that there is no freedom of the press, so that everybody occupies himself with self-glorification on the one hand and with burning incense to the leaders on the other. The "citizen" of Europe and America which is to be found in every reformist has no idea of what is meant by self-criticism. It is true that there is no free speech for the bourgeoisie in Soviet Russia, that there is not freedom to sell oneself to the lords of this world. The Soviet press is the press of the working class as a whole, and in their everyday work, and especially at their

congresses and conferences the Soviet trade union and political leaders carry on a ruthless struggle against all that might disintegrate and pervert the machinery created by the working class, that might weaken the dictatorship of the proletariat, that might hinder the work of socialistic construction. In the bourgeois countries the newspapers are also filled with criticism, but if they are well paid they begin to write quite the reverse. We have seen such incidents not only in the press, but in the parliaments. There is and can be nothing of that kind in the U.S.S.R. There is no country in the world where the ruling class criticises itself as does the ruling class of the U.S.S.R. And as the trade union congress represented the ruling class in the land of the Soviets it could not but have all its proceedings stamped with the mark of self-criticism.

THE Soviet trade union congress is sharply distinguished from the congresses of the reformist trade unions of Germany, Britain, the United States, and so on, both in its external aspect, and especially by the content of its work. In the first place, the composition of the congress is different. At the eighth congress sixty per cent. of the delegates were participating in all-Union congresses for the first time. At this congress there was a considerable group of workers directly elected from the factories and works straight to the congress. There was a large percentage of women in the congress; and another characteristic feature was the considerable decline in the number of professional trade unionists, workers in the governing organs of the trade union movement. The British, German and American congresses always present an exhibition of trade union bureaucrats, and only trade union bureaucrats. For dozens of years the same men go to the congress, which they have transformed into a holiday jaunt, and continue to repeat their monotonous, dreary reformist refrains year after year. These are congresses of reformist officials, and not congresses of genuine representatives of the masses. But the Soviet trade union congresses are distinguished from the reformist congresses not only by their composition, but, and this is of special importance, by the nature of their activity. Where-



ever and whenever before has one seen the very leaders of the trade union movement subjecting their own weaknesses to criticism? Read the reports of the German, British and other trade union congresses, and you will see that the knights of "democracy" and the defenders of free speech make more than restrained speeches at their own congresses. Self-criticism is neither audible nor evident. The leaders themselves never speak of their weaknesses and defects; they resort to pathos only when they find it necessary to speak against the revolutionary opposition, to brand them and drive them out of the congress. They never speak of their own defects, but always of their services and the great benefits which they confer on the working class. In this regard the Soviet trade union congresses present a sharp contrast with the traditional congresses of the trade union bureaucrats, and consequently deserve the most serious and attentive study.

**A**MONG the bourgeois and reformist journalists there is at present a special variety of collector of Soviet defects. Through the emigrés, and in part directly, they fish out of the Soviet press all the negative passages which the Soviet writers and speakers use concerning themselves. Having collected an adequate number of such facts, they season it with a special sauce of hatred and, after mixing it to their own satisfaction, they offer it to their readers as "the truth about the U.S.S.R." told by Soviet leaders themselves. To this kind of collector the eighth trade union congress presents a particularly rich field. For in reality there was not a single problem concerning which there was not a citation of hundreds of negative facts. Whether it was a question of the state of industry or co-operation, of agriculture or the State machinery, whether there were organisational, cultural and educational questions under consideration, or the existence and life of the workers—the speakers unceasingly unmasked bureaucracy, struggle with the violation of democracy, scourged the degeneration of State and co-operative officials, not stopping before a harsh, ruthless condemnation of those links in the State, co-operative, and trade union machinery which had fallen under the influence of petty bourgeois elements, had

disintegrated and begun to carry out an anti-proletarian policy.

Given the desire to represent everything in a black light, to see only evil in the U.S.S.R., one can gather a very telling array of facts and citations and can remark, as the "Socialist Courier" very frequently does: "See what the Soviet trade union movement looks like." Let no one be disturbed by these methods of the enemies of the Soviet dictatorship and of socialism in the making. The most backward worker in the U.S.S.R. knows full well that self-criticism is a cleansing fire, and that in the purge of our ranks, in the disclosure of all the rottenness, the negative aspects of our work will inevitably be displayed and that in capitalist countries there are specialists in rottenness, greedy for sensations, who will clutch at every word of criticism. The Soviet workers know this; they are not disturbed in the least by it. Nor will it disturb one single European or American worker. When reading the "Vorwaerts" representation of the Soviet trade union movement, let them not be disturbed in the least, but remember that in this matter the Soviet proletariat acts in accordance with the French proverb: "The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on."

**T**HE opportunists of all countries and of all shades never cease to prophesy a split between the Soviet trade unions, the Soviet government and the C.P.S.U. In connection with the intensification of the struggle against the right danger in the Comintern, right wing Communists have been found in Germany who have endeavoured to speculate on the attitude of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. "The Comintern," these Communists considered, "is acting against us, the Profintern also, but the All-Union Central Trade Union Council is of our point of view." Certain right wingers in Germany indulged in such speculations, counting on the belief that the rank and file German Communist has no knowledge of the inter-relationships that exist between the trade union movement and the Communist Party in the U.S.S.R., and that it would be possible to disturb someone with such speculations. The opportunists of the U.S.S.R. counted on analogous factors. To these latter also it appeared that they might be able to find a



basis of support in the trade unions for those right tendencies on which the Party had declared war. But the opportunists of all countries were profoundly mistaken in their calculations. The congress demonstrated an unshakable will to insist on the political line and the organisational activity of the Profintern, and gave it wholehearted approval. The congress condemned those members of the trade union opposition who attempted to speak against the decisions of the fourth congress, and thus displayed the utmost unity of the ranks of the Soviet trade union movement in the struggle against the right danger in the ranks of the Profintern.

In all the decisions taken by the congress the entire unanimity of the congress with the general line of the C.P.S.U. is particularly emphasised, and in a special resolution the Communist fraction of the congress declared that the Communist trade union officials, who represent the backbone of the whole Soviet trade union movement, had been, still were and would remain with the Party, for the Party, against all its enemies and any form of deviation. The fraction declared that it regarded the rightward deviation as the most dangerous, and wholly and completely supported the decision taken by the November plenum of the C.P.S.U. Thus both on the Profintern line and on the internal Party line the opportunists of all countries were out in their calculations.

THE eighth trade union congress supported the general line of the C.P.S.U. in all its decisions. It was the first congress of Soviet trade unions to be held under the conditions of reconstruction. For that very reason the congress reflected the diffi-

culties which are bound up with the initial period of reconstruction in an agrarian country. The trade unions, the basic proletarian mass organisation of the U.S.S.R. perceive better than any other organisation or persons the material and cultural growth of the working class in Soviet Russia. But on the other hand they directly experience also the pressure of the petty bourgeois and raw elements of the proletariat, a pressure which arises out of the intensification of class antagonisms in the Soviet countryside. That is why the congress declared particularly strongly in favour of the necessity of struggling against the right wing danger and the reconciliation movement. In both internal and external policy it went hand in hand with the C.P.S.U., and with the international Communist movement. For that reason this congress, representing more than eleven millions of workers and employees, is of outstanding international importance.

Now the gigantic Soviet trade union movement is considering, studying and working over the decisions taken at the eighth congress. The international trade union and Communist movement in the form of the revolutionary unions and the Communist Parties must popularise the decisions taken at the eighth trade union congress, for those decisions herald not only a great step forward of the Soviet trade union movement, but the enormous successes of the entire international Communist and revolutionary trade union movement. The Soviet trade unions are flesh of the flesh and bone of the bone of international Communism, with whose spirit the decisions and resolutions of the eighth trade union congress were permeated to the last sentence.

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# The Improvement and Cleansing of the C.P.S.U.

E. Yaroslavsky

## THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP

**T**HE problem of the social composition of the C.P.S.U. has always confronted us as one of the utmost importance, one to which throughout its existence the Party has given most attention. And this same problem has served as the subject of sharp attacks on the Party by the opposition.

At the very beginning of Bolshevism, at the Party second congress, disputes over the question of who should be a member of the Party divided us from Trotsky, who with Axelrod and Martov was very concerned to ensure that our Party constitution should not in any way hinder sympathising students and professors from regarding themselves as members. Throughout our struggle right down till October, the problem of attracting workers into the Party never vanished from the pages of our legal and illegal press, and constituted the special care of our finest organisers. Lenin especially always emphasised the necessity of concentrating attention on the large factories and works, of transforming them into fortresses, into a base for the activity of the Socialist Party, which should draw its finest reserves, should choose its leaders, and should fill out its committees from among the workers. For this reason in our struggle with the liquidators we attached enormous importance to the fact that in the State Duma the Bolsheviks were represented by five workers, that the workers were the main element in our subscribers to "Pravda" and 14 other newspapers, that the largest trade unions, those of the metal workers and others, supported our campaign, and so on. And if we had not had such a stable basis among the working masses, it would have been difficult for us to extend our influence to the army and the peasantry in 1917.

It is not the purpose of this article to make a detailed study of the changes that have taken

place in the social composition of our Party during the years since October. On the eve of October, Lenin, in "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?" pointed to the fact that in the present-day situation as it is created by all the course of imperialistic development, "when the conscious workers have formed a Party of a quarter of a million, for the purpose of taking this apparatus into their hands in an orderly fashion, and setting it going with the support of all the labouring and exploited—when these conditions are evident to all, then there is no force on earth which can hinder the Bolsheviks, if only they do not allow themselves to be cowed and are able to seize power, from also retaining it until the final victory of the world socialist revolution." (1922 Ed.; p. 108.)

## THE PRESENT POSITION

Needless to say, while on the eve of October the workers did succeed in consolidating a Party of a quarter of a million, the enormous tasks which confronted us on the morrow of October demanded the concentration of much wider strata of leading, class-conscious workers and the organisation of all the Communist elements under our Party's banner. This task is the more complex in the U.S.S.R., because of the fact that since the break-up of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries only one party is openly active in the political field, and also because even to-day the working class of the towns is a rather small group by comparison with the entire mass of toilers, and is, moreover, continually being supplemented by new, fresh reserves from the countryside, who bring with them their semi-peasant ideology. The Communist Party attracts not only the workers of the large factories and works, but also those of the small enterprises, and the artisans who have lost their independence, the poor peasant, and



even the middle peasant. The Party attracts the intelligentsia, not infrequently of petty bourgeois, suburban origin. Elements of a non-proletarian origin, who have worked for years close to the Party, and who have won its confidence, also penetrate into it. At the present time, the C.P.S.U. in consequence, presents from the social aspect, a far from homogeneous grouping. The membership is composed of approximately 61 per cent. of workers, 20.9 per cent. peasants, and 18.1 per cent. employees and others. This was the position on July 1st, 1928, exclusive of the Red Army and Soviet institutions abroad. Numerically the Party probably contains close on 1½ millions at the present moment.

#### ANALYSIS BY OCCUPATION

If an analysis be made on the basis not of social composition but of occupation, it appears that quite a large number of workers, proletarian by origin and by their previous occupations, are at the present time engaged in the direction of various administrative, economic, trade union and Party institutions and are no longer directly connected with production. Only 42.4 per cent. are directly connected with production, and of these 2 per cent. are agricultural labourers and the remainder are workers in factories, works and transport. Peasants by occupation constitute 12.3 per cent., employees 35 per cent., and others (students, artisans, unemployed, etc.), 10.3 per cent. It must not be forgotten that the Communist Party, which is a governing Party, is every day raising fresh workers to administrative and directive posts, thus drawing from the factories and works reserves of organisers and directors of the Soviet State in all its branches. Furthermore, unstable elements are continually penetrating into the Party, elements subject to the influence of the environing petty bourgeois milieu and to its degradation, and that under the influence of this petty bourgeois milieu individual members of the Party distort the Party line. We have never attempted to conceal these facts, and the work of our control commissions is directed towards systematically cleansing the Party from such elements; from alien, tainted, disintegrated, bureaucratised elements with connections foreign to the Party and the work-

ing class. And from time to time the Party conduct a general cleansing campaign, a fundamental examination and purging of its ranks. Such a cleansing occurred in 1921, when after the discussion with the Trotskyists, the Sapronovists and the "Workers' Opposition" the Party established the fact that there existed within its ranks anarcho-syndicalist and petty-bourgeois vacillations, when at its tenth congress it resolved to conduct a purging of its ranks. From the report to the eleventh congress we learn that the total membership of the Party (excluding Turkestan) before the cleansing of the Party, was 659,000, and after the cleansing it was 500,000. Thus 159,000 members, or 23 per cent. of the Party were expelled, or left voluntarily, during the purge, of which the voluntary resignations number about 18,000. In certain organisations the percentage of exclusions and resignations was very high, even in workers' organisations: in Leningrad 18.1 per cent.; in Moscow 17.8 per cent.; in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, 12 per cent.; in Nijni Novgorod, 17.4 per cent.; in Sverdlovsk, 18.8 per cent.; in Kostroma, 18.2 per cent.; in Tula, as much as 34.3 per cent. In the agricultural provinces the percentage in some places was still higher. Thus the Ribinsk organisation had a percentage of 38.9 exclusions.

Despite the fact that the purge was fairly violent, certain of our comrades, including Lenin himself, fully realised that owing to the great difficulties involved in such a purge insufficiently tempered and unsatisfactory elements still remained inside the Party. On March 26th, 1922, Lenin wrote to comrade Molotov:

"I do not propose a fresh general purge of the Party, for I think that at the moment it is practically unrealisable, but it is absolutely necessary that we should find some way of effecting an actual purge of the Party, i.e., of reducing its numbers, and if thought be given to it I am convinced that a number of suitable measures will be discovered."

Since then we have made several purges of our ranks; in a number of provinces there have been purges of the village nuclei, most tainted in their social composition and evoking the imprecations of the surrounding population; after the discussion with the Trotskyists in 1924 a purge of the Soviet and Higher



Educational nuclei was carried out. The opposition took the view that it was quite impermissible to carry out a purge of the nuclei after a discussion, since they said such a purge would be merely a persecution of those who had taken part in the discussion. They forgot that even in Lenin's time, in 1921, at the tenth congress it was decided to undertake a purge of the Party after a very serious discussion.

#### THE PROLETARIAN KERNEL

On the other hand, we have strengthened our Party by setting ourselves the task of increasing the proletarian kernel, and this has constituted the chief care of the Party. In this regard the figures published by comrade E. Smitten in his article: "On the Question of Party Growth," printed in "Pravda," No. 271, for November 21st, 1928, are extremely interesting. From this article we learn that since January, 1924, the number of worker nuclei has grown by 121 per cent. whilst the number of other, non-worker nuclei has grown only by 38 per cent. Not only has the number of nuclei grown, but their specific importance also. Whilst on January 1st the worker nuclei constituted only 17.5 per cent. of the total number of nuclei, at the present moment it comprises more than 25 per cent. The membership of the worker nuclei has also grown. At the beginning of 1924 it comprised less than one-quarter of the total Party membership; at the present moment worker nuclei embrace more than half of the total Communists, and the absolute figure of workers in nuclei has grown by 505 per cent. Whilst in 1924 there was an average of 24 Communists to a nucleus, on July 1st, 1928, there was an average of 66 Communists to each worker nucleus. Of recent years, concomitantly with the increase of our organisation in the factories and works we have turned to the organisation of craft nuclei, and at the present moment we have more than 5,000 such nuclei. In any event, we now have a little under 900,000 members and candidates who are workers or employees taken from the workers' ranks. And even if this figure be reduced during the forthcoming purge, it none the less represents an enormous force, an enormous number, if it be remembered that the average

percentage of Communists among the workers is about 12 per cent., whilst in the case of individual organisations the figure is still higher. (In Leningrad, 19 per cent. of the workers are Communists.) It must not be forgotten that the young workers who are not in the Party are members of the Young Communist League, so that these figures have to be approximately doubled if we wish to get any idea of the political complexion of the Soviet workers.

None the less, we have to face a definite lag. Among the worker Party members engaged in production there is a lag in the numerical growth of those occupied in large enterprises. Among the workers of the large enterprises we have a Communist section amounting to 12 per cent. of the total, whilst among the workers of the medium and small-scale enterprises (those employing less than 2,000 workers), the figure is 13.5 per cent. The new stage of the socialist construction is bound up with a strengthening of the role of the large-scale enterprises, especially those of heavy industry. In accordance with this the role and importance of the Communists working in these large-scale enterprises ought to grow. This is indispensable to the success of rationalisation, to the consolidation of the governing role of these enterprises. There is an inadequate flow into the Party of workers with a long industrial production record. Here we may note the Menshevik (alias Trotskyist) talk to the effect that the workers who joined the Party during the "Lenin enrolment" and in the "October enrolment," are workers who have not experienced the class struggle. But it is hardly necessary to dispute the fact that there were thousands of workers worthy of standing among the ranks of the foremost, the most class conscious, the most revolutionary proletarians, whom we did not succeed in drawing into the Party. Consequently, the November Plenum laid down that "the really most advanced elements of the working class must be induced to join the Party, those capable of leading the way as the vanguard of the working masses in the practical task of overcoming the difficulties of socialist development, of warding off the attacks of petty bourgeois irresolution, and of increasing the confidence felt in the Party by the whole mass of the workers and working peasantry."



The attention of Party members must be directed towards and concentrated on this, they must be galvanised in this work, all mechanical methods must be abandoned, every worker must display great initiative and persistence. This should result in the Party workers drawing closer to the formally non-Party elements. In places complaints are made of the passivity of the Communists, of their cliquiness, their feeble reaction to the problems agitating the working masses, and occasionally even of their haughty attitude to those masses. These features must be resolutely eliminated. The Plenum quite clearly formulated the concrete task: "It is our most urgent and definite task to gain as members for the Party those working men and women who have proved their political steadfastness in times of difficulty, who are real proletarian internationalists, who furnish a personal example of increased productivity and working discipline, who fight ardently and tenaciously against bureaucracy, who work actively for their cultural development, and who are therefore capable of closing more firmly than ever the Leninist ranks."

#### WOMEN WORKERS

There is a lag in the growth of Party membership among working women. Despite a number of objective, socially existent and economic conditions which still prevent the women workers from taking equal participation with the male workers in the life of the Party and the Young Communist League, we could achieve great successes in this sphere if we put sufficient energy into attracting the woman worker into our ranks. Naturally it is not only a question of propaganda and agitation, but also of giving the maximum attention to the elimination of conditions which hinder women workers becoming active mem-

bers of the Leninist Party and Young Communist League.

#### AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

It is of no less importance to achieve a corresponding consolidation of the Party ranks in the countryside. There our proletarian influence is less; there are no proletarian masses; there is less control over the Party centres; the influence of the petty-ownership elements is more severe and strong. We must with great insistence ensure the entry of the agricultural men and women labourers and the poor collective-farm peasants into the Party. The growth in the socialist elements in agriculture must occur parallel with the growth of the labourer and poor peasant kernel in our Party. During the forthcoming period we must measure the success of the Party work of any organisation, especially those in the agricultural areas, by the growth not only of the town workers, but also the workers on the land and in the forests. Adequate forces and resources must be flung into this work.

#### RECONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

The November Plenum of the C.P.S.U. C.C. considered in detail the question of enrolling workers into the Party in connection with the change to the radical reconstruction of industry and agriculture. The Soviet State now has more pre-requisites for this work than it had previously. During Lenin's time those pre-requisites existed in far from so developed a form as now. Only idiotically malevolent considerations could have suggested to the Trotskyists the analogy of the present day with those of Kerensky, or their talk of the October film now being unrolled inside-out before our eyes. At a general town meeting of the Zaporozhia party organisation on

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September 1st, 1925, Trotsky said: "The dry figures of the State Planning Commission are the first and the greatest witness in the world to the increasing triumph of socialism over capitalism." So very much has changed since he said that! If towards the end of 1925 the economic life of the country had so developed that for Trotsky "the dry figures of the State Planning Commission are the first and greatest witness in the world to the increasing triumph of socialism over capitalism," what is to be said of the present-day figures, which have far outstripped the figures of 1925? If the Trotskyists had the veriest drop, the veriest shade, the tiniest remnant of honesty and objectivity, they would have to recognise that since 1925 we have moved forward along the road to socialism with gigantic steps, both in the industrial and in the agricultural sphere. But just because we are moving with gigantic steps, just because the rate of our construction is so intensified, we are coming up against great difficulties and the greatest of opposition. We do not even refer to the fact that all the activities of the Trotskyists and their like (Sapronovists, Miasnikovists) are now a positive hindrance to that movement, are as much an obstacle as is all the activity of our class enemies.

#### EIGHTY PER CENT. WORKERS

But the Party knows excellently that these difficulties can be overcome only if the Party is sufficiently strong, sufficiently homogeneous, if the backbone of the Party, the proletariat, is as strong as possible. And hence arises the task which the Party has set itself for the immediately forthcoming period, of taking in again not less than 80 per cent. of workers, so that not later than 1930 "not less than half the Party's composition shall be workers in industry." This task will be carried out by us in its entirety, and probably even with something to spare, since the workers' movement into the Party is now quite strong. Of course, we shall have to restrict the acceptance of other elements.

In 1922, Lenin pointed out the danger of the worker section not being sufficiently strong in our Party. He wrote to comrade Molotov: "If we do not shut our eyes to the reality we have to admit that at the present time the proletarian policy of the Party is determined

not by its composition, but by the enormous, undivided authority of that more slender stratum which may be called the old Party guard. There has but to be a little internal struggle in that stratum and its authority will be, if not broken, then at least weakened to such an extent that the decision will no longer depend on it."

Consequently it is necessary to add to all the candidate stages, and to define with especial detail what has to be the concrete and practical condition of checking that the candidate stages are really passed through, and are not left an empty formality. Also it is necessary to establish a qualified majority in those institutions which decide the question of accepting new members into the Party, and it is necessary to make those acceptances conditional not on the decisions of the provincial committees alone, but on those of control commissions. Finally, other measures also have to be worked out for the purpose of facilitating the liberation of the Party from those members who are not in the least Communists, quite consciously carrying out a proletarian policy. (Tomsky's speech at the Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.) By the end of 1930, owing to the transference of part of the workers from production to administration, and owing also to the acceptance of not less than 80 per cent. of workers as new members of the Party, the total of workers in our Party will probably have grown to at least 70 per cent. of the total membership. This measure is indispensable to ensure that the Party shall be able to carry out the enormous tasks which confront it. It is necessary that the proletarian section of our Party should be able to direct the entire rebuilding of our economy not merely in words, but in deed. And it is vitally important that in the countryside the social composition of our Party should change radically in the direction of attracting the labourer elements on the one hand and the peasant collective-farm and commune workers on the other.

A purge of the Party at the present time is, of course, a much more difficult matter than it was in 1921. For the Party is twice, and more than twice, as large as it was then, and if in 1921 Lenin regarded this task as an extraordinarily difficult one (he even refused to carry through a new purge of the Party), at



the present time it is not less, but even more difficult. But the forces at our disposal for carrying out that purge at the present time are also much greater. It is obvious that we have to indicate a definite period for the purge, a definite order, the purging of the village nuclei first, for instance, then the Soviet employees, and so on, the Higher Educational Institution nuclei (students), and then our worker nuclei, the healthiest, and the least tainted. We have to link up this purge and check on our ranks with an enormous political activity for the raising of the political level and the level of activity of our Party members. This test must strengthen the feeling of responsibility of every Party member for the enormous work laid on him by the tasks of the socialist revolution. Needless to say, this purge must also check the extent to which each Party member is an internationalist, the extent

to which he recognises and realises the task of assisting the international struggle of the working class for socialism. The task which the Party has set itself will be carried out, no matter what its complexity, for on the execution of that task depends the success of all those measures which during the next few years have radically to transform the features of the Soviet State, to change it from being an agrarian-industrial country into one industrial-agrarian, to increase the socialist basis not only in the towns but in the villages also, to set the stable foundation of collectivism beneath agriculture, to effect the organisation not only of the town workers but the country toilers into all forms of co-operation, and to move with gigantic strides along the road of socialism, having united the leading proletarian Communist advance-guard with the masses of town workers and village toilers.

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By B.V.

## THE COMINTERN INSTRUCTIONS

**I**N connection with the forthcoming congress discussion is developing inside the Communist Party of France. At the moment of writing this discussion is confined to general questions. Meantime it is absolutely necessary that such concrete questions as the consolidation of the Party on the basis of the decisions of the Comintern Sixth Congress, the decisions of the E.C.C.I., and those of the French C.P. itself in regard to the correction of the previously committed errors and the straightening of the Party line, should be considered, and considered with all due care. The Comintern Sixth Congress laid down that during the forthcoming "third period" of the post-war development of the workers' movement the most important tasks confronting all C.P.'s are those of preparation for the imminent great class struggles, the preparation of the proletarian counter-attack, and the struggle with social-reformists and right deviations for the leadership of those class struggles. In fulfilment of this instruction of the Sixth Congress the Communist Parties have to reconsider how far all their current practice, and especially all their organisational work is adapted to the organisation and leadership of the proletarian counter-attack. These instructions have very direct application to the French C.P. At its February, 1928, conference, this Party, in summarising the results of the work carried out by the Party during the preceding period, and in agreement with the corresponding decisions of the Comintern, declared:

"We have not succeeded in obtaining a sound estimate of the nature of the employers' and government's attack. This false estimate has been a cause of weakness in our leadership of the workers' movement, and of lack of energy in trade union work for the purpose of the proletarian organisation and struggle. As the result of this false estimate we have failed to take account of the movement which began in the spring of 1927. A whole series of errors,

which we must resolutely condemn, are in certain cases passing into a tendency to fetter the workers' movement. By way of example we may point to the textile workers' movement in the Loire district and to the various miners' movements, to the insufficient attention given to the struggle against partial unemployment, and to the obstacles laid in the path of the movement for a rise in wages."

## THE STRIKES OF 1928

After this conference the Party passed through a period of a new wave of strikes which lasted through all 1928. Thus, according to the statistics of the "Unitary Confederation of Labour," from January to October, 1928, there were more than five hundred strikes.

What does the experience of those strikes tell us? The forthcoming Party congress must give special care to summarising the results of the experience gained in these strikes, must check the extent to which the Party has succeeded in overcoming the weakness indicated in the above quoted resolution of the February, 1928, conference.

According to our first preliminary information on the past strikes, the Party is still unable to boast of any serious achievement in the sphere of strike tactics and strategy, or of any noticeable movement in the sphere of its own organisational work.

Thus, for instance, according to the same report, of the five hundred strikes which occurred in France from January to October, 1928, sixty per cent. ended successfully for the workers. This witnesses to the militant mood of the French proletariat, to the presence of objective conditions in which with an adequate preparation and a sound leadership the proletarian counter-attack can reckon on a favourable outcome. But what role did the Unitary Confederation of Labour and its local organisations play in the preparation and leadership of the strikes during January to October, 1928? The leaders of the U.C.T. themselves give a very sad answer to this



question. In demonstration of this one has but to quote a few extracts from the speeches of responsible leaders of the U.C.T. at the Plenum of the U.C.T. Council in October, 1928, when the question of the lessons of the past strikes was being considered.

Comrade X: "The U.C.T. would appear to have been submerged by the strike movement. The masses moved more quickly than we did, and events also. Our organisations did not take the initiative. The practical line of the strike struggle was dictated by the masses. . . The movement came upon us with our old structure, with our organisations still without foundations in the factory. . . . The masses threw themselves into the struggle without thinking of repressions. The workers went into the struggle elementally. In the Citroen works, the workers were unorganised and we had no contact with them. . . . At the Berliez works in Lyons, the workers set up a trade union delegation without us and told the employer that they had nothing in common with the Unitarian trade unions." . . .

Comrade Y. declared that the majority of the strikes of the port workers were organised by the reformist trade unions.

Comrade Z. (the representative of the Northern committee of the Unitary Union of Textile Workers): "In Roubaix-Tourcoing, where 100,000 workers are concentrated, the influence of the Unitary unions is at a minimum and we do not know the attitude of the masses. There is one strong Unitary organisation, but its directing centre did nothing in regard to the strike, and in order to attach themselves to the strike the masses went over the head of this organisation. The strike in Tourcoing enabled us to establish that it was women, youth and foreign workers who brought the factories to a standstill. It evenuated that the main workers and Unitary trade union leadership did not realise the necessity of the struggle. At Hellem the youth took charge of the strike and extended it, despite the opposition of the trade union secretary."

Comrade L. reported that during the furriers' strike the Unitary union organised a strike committee, but the majority of the members of the committee proved to be antagonists of the Unitary union.

The examples we have cited are sufficient to establish that in the realm of leadership of the revolutionary Unitary trade unions and in the realm of leadership of the proletarian economic struggle the French C.P. is in the main repeating its previous errors.

One may ask further, in view of the fact that the instances cited have reference to the leading workers of the Unitary Confederation of Labour, how the leading Party centres estimated the position? Unfortunately this question has to be answered by saying that the leading Party organs paid little attention to the study of the concrete lessons of the strike movement. The temporary Politbureau published the following general conclusions from the experience of the 1928 strikes, only on December 16th last in "L'Humanité," as part of a general resolution on the internal Party situation: "The slogan for a general rise in wages has frequently been raised too late, the work for the united front and for the establishment of factory committees has been very inadequate. The unions of port workers and dockers, of metal workers, textile workers and miners did not take the initiative, they underestimated the militant readiness of the masses (the declaration of many strikes without preparation and without the participation of our Party), and at the same time they did not realise the leading role of the trade union organisation in the strike movement (the referendum among the textile workers of Rouen). The regional committees of the Party still do not give adequate attention to the workers demonstrations and have not succeeded in putting themselves at their head, thus testifying to their inability to understand the importance of the proletariat's economic struggle in the present conditions. Finally, the trade union work for the conquest of the large enterprises has been feeble, despite the decisions previously taken in this direction."

From the foregoing quotation from the Politbureau resolution of December 16th, it is clear that in the main the Politbureau estimates the position in regard to strikes in the same sense as the leading workers of the U.C.T.

In order to complete the picture, we also quote the letter of a certain Young Communist League comrade, who was a direct participant in the northern strike of textile workers. This letter to his comrades was written as an official



report on the position of the northern strike to the Central Committee of the Y.C.L.

The comrade first remarks that in his opinion the majority of the local workers thought it was necessary to wait until the social democratic leaders acted under the pressure of their adherents; in order words, here we have the favourite idea of the German right wingers, that it is necessary to force the trade union hierarchy to organise and conduct the strike. Obviously, from this aspect there is no point in talking of carrying through an independent preparation for strikes, of the creation of a revolutionary leadership of the strike movement, and so on. "L'Humanité" published an article by its "special correspondent," comrade Berlioz (the author of the notoriously opportunistic theory of "active reformism") on the strike of the northern textile workers. The beginning of this article was written in triumphant strain; the masses were rising all around, were marching into battle, the reformists were impotent to stop the movement, the employers were shivering in their shoes, and so on.

Then the triumphal tone began to falter and notes of alarm began to grow louder: alarm at the power and art of manœuvring shown by the reformists. Finally, Berlioz communicated (all in the capacity of special correspondent of the central organ of the Party) that the reformists and the government were so strong that the textile workers must retreat and admit themselves beaten.

#### ATTACK THE SOCIAL REFORMISTS

Of course, under no pretext should we depreciate the power and ability of the social reformists to carry out treacherous manœuvres. But our refusal to depreciate the power of the antagonist should involve first and foremost our own stronger attack upon and defeat of that antagonist, and not the stammering of opportunistic nonsense such as "force the hierarchy." Further, as the above-mentioned Young Communist's letter shows, the chief guilt for the strength of the reformists during the northern textile workers' strike lies also with the Communists, with the leadership of the local party organisation and in particular with the leading workers in the regional committee of the Unitary textile workers' union.

The young comrade writes: "In addition to

an inadequate analysis of the situation, a complete absence of political leadership." The comrade attributes the cause of this absence of leadership to the existence of insignificant differences among the leading comrades during the strike, which differences hindered their acting amicably. In order words, a poorly selected Party leadership, the absence of the necessary firm iron discipline. Further, the comrade thus characterises the work preparatory to the strike: "Work purely superficial, no solid work was done, which connotes that the 'class against class' tactic remained incomprehensible. The transition to the counter-attack was carried through without any preparatory organisational work whatever." Further, the comrade states: "They treated with the reformist trade unions in parliamentary fashion, and at the same time hundreds of thousands of workers, women, adolescents, adults, were touched only through meetings. No works' committee was organised, no picketing was considered."

The comrade attributes this truly miserable state of affairs to the passivity of the Party organisation. "The Communist fractions in the local organisations have never been active, and instead of the Communists giving life to the unions in order to attract the masses into the struggle, we have innumerable instances of trade union bureaucracy, especially in Tourcoing among the textile workers." We consider that the Young Communist comrade was absolutely right when, in summarising his analysis of the situation, he drew the following conclusion: "In the northern region our Party was not ready, it was . . . the textile capitalists who were masters of the situation in resolving the strike issue, and not our organisations."

#### THE DEFEATIST POISON

But possibly in view of the existence of such conditions the entire northern strike was an anarchial, putschist error, for which the central organs of the Party and the U.C.T. ought to bear the responsibility? According to the young comrade's letter such a deduction would be the greatest of errors. There may be discussion as to the wisdom of the date chosen for the declaration of the strike. The comrade confirms that an error was committed here,



and in particular that there was a display of anarchic arbitrariness on the part of one of the responsible workers of the Unitary textile workers' union, who declared the strike despite the decisions of the chief strike committee. If this actually happened the guilty worker should be immediately removed from all Party and trade union positions and condemned as a strike-breaker, for if it is a serious crime for the general discipline of the strike struggle to be violated by rank and file workers, the violation of the basic decisions of the strike committee by a member of that committee is a hundred times worse.

But once the strike is declared it is necessary to act with the greatest determination, in order to ensure the unanimity of the strikers and to paralyse the manœuvres of the enemies. Meantime, the young comrade writes: "On Saturday after dinner, and on Sunday the workers and strikers were left to their own devices by our organisations, and during this period the reformists and the Christian trade unions redoubled their activities for the extending of a defeatist mood among the ranks of the working class. In this work they were supported by certain contribution collectors of the Unitary union, who were the worst of defeatists." In other words, on the Sabbath day our comrades "rested," in accordance with the biblical injunction and the traditions of the petty bourgeois philistines and bureaucrats, whilst the reformists worked, drawing into their activities certain direct strike-breakers from the officials of the Unitary union. Then the following position arose. It appears that on Monday morning the same leader who, despite the decisions of the chief strike committee, had begun the strike, now called in the same manner for the ending of the strike in Tourcoing and in Armentières. Again, we do not learn from this letter what punishment this creature received for his still more serious crime against the working class, although it is quite obvious that the Party and the revolutionary trade union organisations ought to inflict a heavy punishment on their rank and file members for such activities, and a still heavier one on responsible workers. In particular the question naturally arises whether he can remain even as a rank and file member in the ranks of the C.P. and the Unitary trade union. Thus Monday was

passed in a dispute among the leadership, and the mass was evidently again left to the influence of the reformists and other strike-breakers. On Tuesday morning, our young comrade writes, the chief strike committee decided to organise a referendum. However, before the referendum took place, on Tuesday afternoon, a workers' delegation came to the strike committee with a declaration that the workers wanted to continue the strike. Then it was decided to continue the strike, and the question was even raised of extending the workers' participation in the struggle, which was done several days later, by the stoppage of several factories in Lille, but without any serious preliminary work in those enterprises.

There you have a very eloquent, and definite commentary on the declarations of the leaders of the U.C.T. and the resolutions of the Politbureau of 16th December.

#### SOME CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of these facts the forthcoming congress of the Party must draw all the political and organisational conclusions and compel the new Central Committee to put them into force as soon as possible; otherwise, as is quite evident, the C.P. of France will continue to remain impotent in the now maturing class battles, and will not be able to carry out the most important decisions of the Comintern Sixth Congress and its most important obligations to the French and the international proletariat. This issue is set by history with inexorable severity: either a straightening of the line in action, in the practical leadership of the proletarian class struggles, or a further series of heavy political defeats, with the further organisational enfeeblement of the Party organisation, is inevitable.

In the resolution of December 16th the Politbureau manfully laid bare all the most serious defects and errors committed by the party, and in particular by the fraction in the U.C.T. during the 1928 strikes. But it seems to us that this statement of defects and errors is not quite complete, and this circumstance will render it difficult for the party to straighten its line in practice.

#### SOME FURTHER CONCLUSIONS

We suggest, for example, that from the definite experience of the textile workers'



strike in the north the following unusually important conclusions arise.

Whilst the C.C. of the Party and the leadership of the U.C.T. have taken an entirely sound line, arising out of the decisions of the Comintern Sixth Congress and the Profintern Fourth Congress, and whilst this political attitude meets with the warmest sympathy and response among the working masses, the middle ranks of the Party and the Unitary trade unions are drawing the Party back to the old anarchic, reformist and professional opportunist methods of work. The young comrade previously mentioned also writes of this quite definitely. The C.C. of the C.P. of France have more than once discussed the question of the paucity of the cadres, so that in consequence of this insufficiency the Party is not in a position to exploit to the full favourable external conditions. Of course, there is a shortage of directing cadres in the C.P. of France, and the question of filling their ranks with fresh forces is undoubtedly among the most important problems of the Party at the present time. But simultaneously the Party is confronted even more definitely with the question of the immediate replacement of part of the present cadres, which during the strike and other demonstrations of the proletariat have proved themselves to be afflicted with officialism, bureaucracy, opportunism, and quite incapable of fulfilling the functions of cadres of the Communist Party in the present developing situation. A discussion on the right danger is going on in the Party. The names of individual members of the present C.C. who have manifested opportunistic tendencies are being openly mentioned. This self-criticism is indispensable. The Party is raising the question of a politically homogeneous political leadership. This also is sound, since, in the present period of preparation for great class battles and for the leadership of those battles, if the Party does not possess a politically homogeneous leadership it may find itself paralysed. But the political homogeneity of the leadership must connote a political homogeneity of leadership along the whole line of the Party hierarchy in the C.C., in the editorship of the central and the local organs, in the Party regional committees, in the fractions of the directing organs of the Unitary trade unions, and so on. And the greatest of

attention must be directed to the fact, more than once recorded of recent days, that the so-called middle cadres of the Party and in particular the middle cadres of the Unitary trade unions have deflected and are still deflecting the line of the Party C.C. and of the U.C.T. leadership to the right, in the direction of opportunism. As is particularly well known, this was clearly revealed during the last dockers' strike in Bordeaux, where the leadership had to obtain contact with the striking workers over the head of the local Unitary leadership, whilst the latter established a united front with the reformist leaders and did their utmost to hinder the development of the movement.

The natural question arises: Where are the new cadres to be obtained? The following answer must be given: from the rank and file workers who, during the course of the last strikes, have shown themselves to be staunch revolutionaries, bound closely with the masses and organisers and inspirers of the strike struggle. Undoubtedly many hundreds of such comrades have been revealed recently. There must be great boldness in beginning a systematic work of filling up the leading ranks of the Party by means of these finest front-line members of the proletarian mass struggle.

#### THE WORKERS ON THE LEFT

It is of imperative necessity that the Party should now give serious thought to the fact that during a number of the recent strikes a situation has arisen in which the local Party organisations, including the factory nuclei in certain cases, have under-estimated the masses' readiness for struggle and for sacrifice, and as a result the organisers of the revolutionary attacks of the proletarian masses have proved to be not the Party organisations, and not even individual Party members, but non-Party workers. Lenin frequently warns us against the possibility of a situation arising in which the working masses should prove to be more left than the Party, and that such a situation would demand of the Party a greater boldness in the development of revolutionary activities, more ruthlessness in the struggle with opportunism in its own ranks, more resolution in the establishment of internal Party democracy, in self-criticism, in changing leaders who have shown themselves incap-



able of preparing and directing the struggles. The C.P. of France is now evidently living through such a period. The situation is rendered more acute in their case by one further problem: that of drawing the rank and file mass workers and unskilled labourers into the Party and the Unitary trade unions. So far the Party and the Unitary trade unions are to a very large extent composed of elements of the worker aristocracy. Such a social composition cannot but have influence in the direction of intensifying the anarchic-reformist and the direct opportunist tendencies.

A number of the recent strikes, and, in particular, the northern strike of the textile workers, revealed the young workers, the women workers and the foreign workers as the active element of the movement, and in individual cases as the basic active element. But it is these sections of the proletariat that are least of all drawn into the Party and Unitary trade union organisations. The Party must adopt the most urgent measures to fill this gap.

#### BETTER ORGANISATION

The recent strikes have once again shown that the situation in regard to works nuclei and trade union fractions still remains very unsatisfactory, and that this circumstance is the cause of all the organisational weakness of the Party in regard to activity in preparation of strikes and of their leadership. It is time to establish the responsibility of the corresponding links of the Party machinery and the corresponding Party workers for work in this direction, it is time to stop organising the Party on the basis of factory nuclei only by resolutions and reports. In connection with this the question again arises of the sections devoted to Party life in "L'Humanité," in the pages of the provincial organs of the Party, and in the factory newspapers. When will these sections on Party life begin to function as the resolutions of the Party lay down, and as is demanded by the pressing necessity to strengthen organisational work? And when will the factory newspapers, in which also hundreds of good decisions are taken, also begin to grow in number and to appear regularly in the largest enterprises of all the most important spheres of industry? All these practical questions must necessarily obtain an

absolutely practical answer at the forthcoming Party congress.

In conclusion, we provide a few principles in regard to definite organisational work during strike movements.

1. Essential are the most intensive preliminary preparations inside the enterprises; the intensification of the work of the factory nuclei, and on factory newspapers; the obligatory meeting of the directing factory Party centre, together with the obligatory attraction of the finest leaders of the non-Party and revolutionarily minded workers.

2. From the moment that the corresponding directing Party body has taken a decision for a demonstration, and still more in the case of a declaration of a strike, the factory directing centre indicated in para. 1. must be transformed into a strike committee elected by all the workers of the factory, that committee to be the sole committee empowered to decide such questions as the continuation and calling off of the strike.

3. Inside the enterprises is necessary diligent preparation of elections for the strike committee (private meetings of the nuclei, nuclei meetings including sympathisers for consideration of candidates for the strike committee and its programme of action, the drawing up of definite organisational measures, and the question of how to pass these decisions at general or delegates' meetings).

4. From the moment of the declaration of the strike the regular issue of the factory nucleus newspaper not less than twice a week is absolutely essential.

5. At the close of the strike the factory committee is to be used for the formation of a permanent factory committee, and all the work of the Unitary trade unions is to be reorganised so as in its future work to operate entirely on such factory committees.

6. Wherever owing to the errors of our leadership during the recent strikes the reformists have taken the initiative and have set up their own factory committees and analogous factory committee organisations, there must be an immediate and most energetic struggle to capture these organisations, agitation among the workers of the enterprises for re-elections, an exposure of the traitorous role played by the reformists in breaking the



strikes, with a ruthless criticism of the local reformists and especially of the reformist factory committees, and so on.

8. The obligatory exploitation of the strike movement for the most energetic enrolment of new members (thereby not restricting this purely to agitation), both for the Unitary unions and for the Party, giving particularly serious attention to the fact that during the textile workers' strike in the north the youth, the women and the foreign workers appeared as the most active revolutionary elements.

9. The obligatory formation of Communist fractions in the strike committees. In cases

where there is a poor membership of the fraction, and in cases where no fraction exists whatever, there must be an obligatory appointment of the most responsible Party workers to those places, if possible from members of the bureau of the directing Party centre. Obligatory systematic direction of the work of the factory committee's fractions by the corresponding Party centre. Obligatory preparation of the fraction for every plenary session of the factory committee. Obligatory preliminary preparation of the striking Party members and sympathisers before every general and delegates' meeting of the strikers.





# The Comintern on the Right Danger in The Communist Party of Germany

By B.V.

THE open letter of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. dated 19-12-18, and addressed to all the members of the C.P. of Germany, is of great political significance and decisive importance, not merely for the further Bolshevik development of the C.P.G., but also for the struggle against right opportunist deviation in the whole Comintern.

This international importance of the Presidium's decision on the right danger in Germany becomes obvious immediately one considers that it is perfectly definite social economic conditions which have given rise in the present stage of the world revolution, to such a "luxurious revival" of the Brandler fraction, and to their liquidatory fractional activity, hostile to the Party and the Comintern, which dates from 1923.

The resolution of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern states quite correctly that at present the "main tendency of deviation from the correct political position is towards the right." Why is this right danger the chief danger now? This arises from the peculiarities of the present "third period of the international working class movement" which are described as follows in the theses of the Sixth World Congress:

"This third period, which has greatly intensified the contradiction between the growth of productive forces and the shrinking markets, makes a new era of imperialist wars inevitable. The sharpening of all international contradictions, the hostility between the imperialist countries and the U.S.S.R., the military occupation of North China as the beginning of the partition of China and of struggle among the imperialists, etc., the intensification of internal contradictions in the capitalist countries, the leftward development of the working class masses, the sharpening of the class struggle, the development of the colonial movement in China, Egypt, India,

Syria—because of all these factors, the present period will lead inevitably, through the further development of the contradictions in capitalist stabilisation, to a further breakdown of capitalist stabilisation and to a sharp culmination in the general crisis of capitalism."

This intensification of contradictions, this development of tremendously great struggles against the united front of the bourgeois parties and the bourgeois labour parties—the social democracy—frightens the unstable elements in the Communist Party and gives rise to right deviations. These right deviations became apparent when the Ninth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern laid down the new tactics with the slogan "Class against Class."

The Presidium's Open Letter added to the general analysis given by the Sixth Congress of the sources of the right danger a concrete description and explanation of open and "conciliatory" opportunism, it exposes therein the liquidatory activity of Brandler, Thalheimer, and company to its fullest extent, and judges the "theory and practice of the right deviations and conciliators in relation to the actual life of the revolutionary German workers' movement and the day-to-day struggles of the C.P.G. The Open Letter to all members of the C.P.G., in dealing with the Brandlerites, points out clearly that "they not only fail to recognise the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the R.I.L.U. and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, not only refuse to follow them, but recently have also set themselves actively to oppose their execution and to sabotage and obstruct the political work of the Party directed towards the realisation of those decisions. With regard to the policy of the conciliators, the Presidium's letter declares that "such a deep gulf has opened between the Party and the right fraction that there



can at the present be no talk of a 'reconciliation' between them. There is at the present time no room for the policy of conciliation within the C.P.G. The time has now come to choose between the Party and the right fraction. Either the Party, or the right fraction—that is the choice which must be made. An attitude of conciliation towards the right means, at the present moment, not only a renunciation of the struggle against the right and its splitting activities, but also support of the right as against the Party." Facts confirm this incontrovertibly. Consequently the Open Letter does not merely describe the concrete features and forms of right opportunism, and of conciliation in the German Communist movement, not only giving correct organisational and disciplinary directions which will lead to the immediate liquidation of the right liquidators and will overcome hidden, irresolute opportunism—conciliation—in the C.P.G.—it does more than that; it deals with the general political line through which right deviations and conciliation can be completely exterminated in all Communist Parties.

This is quite clear if we consider that, taken in its essence, the fight against the German rights and conciliators involves an analysis of the most urgent, most important questions confronting the world Communist movement, and all its sections, questions to which the Fourth R.I.L.U. and Sixth Comintern Congresses gave the answer.

What is the real significance of the third period in post-war capitalist development, as defined by the Sixth Congress; what are the new relations of class forces in that period; what tactics must the Communist Parties adopt in their struggles in order to translate into concrete reality the decisions of the Sixth Congress? On all these problems, the Comintern has shed much light by its decision on the opportunist right deviation in the C.P.

First of all, we must be clear about the meaning of this third period, which is the principal question of dispute not only in the struggle against the openly liquidatory Brandler group, but also against the conciliators who, it is true, theoretically dissociate themselves from the right, but actually follow faithfully in their footsteps. This is a basic question not only for the C.P.G., but for the whole international, because it is only from

a real Marxist-Leninist analysis of the present phase of capitalist stabilisation that revolutionary conclusions for the living practice of the Party can be drawn.

What have the right to say about the present position of capitalism? Do they agree with the resolutions of the Sixth Congress on relative stabilisation, with its analysis of the third period? Not at all! For them there is neither relative stabilisation of capitalism nor a third period. How can they speak of any third period in post-war capitalist development, when, for them the stabilisation of capitalism has lost its relative character, at least for a very long time. At night, as we all know, all cats are grey, and, as the right say, "everything remains as it has been," since capitalism defeated the first revolutionary onslaught of the West European proletariat and forced it, in long drawn out struggles, to lose ground step by step.

And what is the opinion of the "conciliators" on the present stage of post-war capitalist development? They "unreservedly" recognise—in words—the decisions of the Sixth Congress. Therein lies the difference between them and the opportunists. They admit the third period as it is reflected in their consciousness. And the way in which it is reflected in the consciousness of "cowardly opportunism," of the conciliators, differs in no respect from the attitude of the open opportunists. What is it in the third period that conciliators actually recognise? That aspect of it which is obvious to them. They accept the positive side of capitalist development, characteristically expressed in the third period: the growth of capitalist technique and productive forces, the fact that capitalism has outstripped its pre-war level of production. But they neither see nor wish to admit the "negative" side of capitalist stabilisation, the tremendous growth of capitalist contradictions, their recurrence to a continually intensifying degree which must lead to a further destruction of capitalist stabilisation. This explains their mockery of those who now, as in the past, agree with the ideas contained in the decisions of the Comintern since the Fifth Congress, which emphasise the relative, indecisive character of present stabilisation and give a correct revolutionary estimation of post-war capitalist development. But while the



conciliators amuse themselves at the expense of those who speak of "indecisive," "temporary," "unwholesome" stabilisation, they are laughing, too, at the decisions of the Sixth Congress. For their interpretation of the third period has nothing in common with that of the Sixth Congress which we quoted above.

From this social economic evaluation of the present position of capitalism there arises a definite conception of the character of the present struggle between trust capital and the proletariat. It is, therefore, no accident that from two diametrically opposed conceptions, of the right and conciliatory opportunists on the one hand, and the Communist International and C.P.G. on the other, there should arise two utterly opposed evaluations of the character of the class struggle. This, too, was clearly shown in the analysis of the right wing and conciliatory position.

What are the ideas of the right about the present character of the class struggle in Germany and elsewhere? For them it is nothing but a defensive struggle, nothing but "rearguard actions" of the proletariat which it has had to make everywhere since the Fifth Congress of the C.I. They are consistent in this respect, that, in making no distinction between the second and third periods, they do not recognise the necessity for any change in the tactical line of the Communist Parties.

What are the ideas of the conciliators about the character of the present struggles between capital and labour? They, too, emphasise, more than anything else, the defensive character of these struggles at the present time, and speak of the possibility of a change to attacking struggles only in the future, when a number of conditions have been fulfilled. In this respect too, they are in complete agreement with the right, who also admit the abstract possibility of a change from defensive to offensive struggles, but who will not admit that the objective conditions for this change to attack and counter-attack are already present in the movement. The reservation which the conciliators make in the real Leninist analysis of the present character of class struggles in Germany, Poland, France, etc., an analysis which declares that both offensive and defensive elements are present in the class struggles of to-day, only betrays their own

position of "cowardly opportunism." For it is peculiarly significant of class struggles to-day, as shown in the examples of Lodz, the strike wave in North France, the strikes and lock-out in Germany, that they are developing on a broader and broader basis, involving greater and greater sections of the working class and are therefore developing, as struggles against the trinity of trust capital, bourgeois State and reformism, from economic into political conflicts. The conciliators fail to see in this—as the right fail—that this change from economic to political mass struggles, which threaten the bourgeois order of society, in itself contains the connecting threads between offensive and defensive factors. The decisions of the Sixth Congress, on this basis, clearly express the new character of the present wave in the working class movement which forms the third period.

Hence, again, it is the accident that the ideas of the right, which openly contradict the decisions of the Sixth Congress, that the half hidden deviations in the ideas of the conciliators about the character of present mass struggles, find particularly strong expression in the question of trade union policy. Here, too, on this most important subject, the standpoint expressed in the decisions of the Fourth R.I.L.U. and Sixth Comintern congresses is diametrically opposed to the standpoint both of the right and of the conciliators who, if not openly, still quite clearly in practice, combat the employment of new trade union tactics.

The two congresses noted, as the starting point for the determination of our trade union tactics at the present time, the following facts: the most recent evolution of the social-democrats and reformist trade unions, their complete assimilation into the bourgeois State machine and trust capital, their new methods of strangling the industrial struggles of the proletariat, their social-fascist splitting tactics which grow with the leftward development of the working masses. To this new situation was due the emphasis laid on the necessity for the Communist Parties and revolutionary trade union opposition winning the leadership in mass struggles, and on the question of new forms of struggle and new organisational bodies for the greatest possible mobilisation and activating of militant workers. The experiences of recent struggles in Germany—



the lock-out of the Ruhr metal workers—afford an excellent opportunity for testing the correctness of those decisions and for clearly estimating the concrete methods of employing the new tactics. But in addition to that they also afford the best possible opportunity for really understanding the attitude of the right opportunists and the conciliators towards this most decisive question of the proletarian movement to-day.

What have the right wingers to say about the new strike strategy, as agreed upon by the two congresses? In their opinion "it leads to a split between the organised and unorganised workers, to a split in the trade unions, to abolishing the Party's influence in the unions, to complete separation from the workers, to isolation." This policy, according to the right, is a new and worse edition of the policy of Maslov and Ruth Fischer. "In its effect this policy is counter-revolutionary." The Brandlerites dare to say this, and during the Ruhr struggle they acted as strikebreakers, they worked hand-in-hand with the reformists to oppose any real revolutionary mobilisation of the masses, any real struggle against the trinity of the bourgeois State, the exploiters and their trade union servants!

What "fighting tactics" are proposed by the right? No other than the old slogan, "Force the bosses' hands," the methods of appeals and petitions to the reformist leaders, the old slogans of demanding payment of wages during lock-outs by the employers, and reopening of the concerns "under workers' control." The opportunist and liquidatory character of these demands and "methods of struggle" is obvious. It is nothing but the naked "Programme of Action" of Brandler and Thalheimer, no longer adorned with evolutionary phrases, the translation of the opportunist "transition slogans" of the Brandlerites into the hard reality of the proletarian class struggle, in which surroundings these transition slogans will immediately appear as what they are—counter-revolutionary "economic democracy" affirming and immortalising the bourgeois State and the capitalist order of society.

It is no accident that the famous Brandlerist transition slogans, when first brought into concrete relation with the revolutionary struggles of the masses, struggles which had

to proceed in opposition to the reformist trade unions, were converted into complete support of the trade union bureaucracy. In the course of the Ruhr struggle the right wingers showed that they were not only ready to "exploit" the arbitration machinery of the exploiters' State, but were prepared, if Severing would not support the award adjudicated by Wissel, to organise the continuation of the struggle under the slogan, "For the Wissel award!" In this they clearly showed that their "control of production," like the other "transition slogans," really mean the transition from the standpoint of revolutionary mass struggle, from the standpoint of revolution against the bourgeois State, to the standpoint of reformist "struggle" within the bourgeois State, the transition from the revolutionary camp of Communism into the camp of treacherous reformism. It follows therefore that the whole force of their slander is directed against the militant leadership of the locked-out Ruhr workers, created by the Communist Party of Germany, which could alone carry on a real struggle.

And the conciliators? It is true that they do not identify themselves with all the demands of the right, but that does not prevent them from supporting the "fighting slogan" of "payment of wages" by the State at the employers' expense, that does not prevent them from seizing upon the complaints of the right, that the leadership created by the Party in the Ruhr struggle could not attain its object because the Party in general was carrying out an incorrect trade union policy. Just like the right, the conciliators accuse the C.C. of the C.P.G. of not having employed correct tactics in the Ruhr struggle because it had transferred the greater part of its work from among the organised to the unorganised workers. They maintain that it was chiefly because of this that the Party did not succeed in winning any considerable percentage of the workers and that the so-called success in the mobilisation of the locked-out workers was only a bluff. Actually, the question of winning the unorganised workers through the Councils of Action, and incorporating them as far as possible as an active factor, as an active, driving force in the struggle, is decisive for our trade union tactics and not merely because it depends to a large extent on the revo-



lutionary answer to this question whether we shall, at the given stage of development, succeed in frustrating all the efforts of the reformists to play off the organised against the unorganised workers, thereby rendering impossible any spontaneous development of a revolutionary struggle on the part of the "lower ranks" of the proletariat against the reformist leaders, and over their heads. Although the trade union bureaucracy employed this method of dividing the workers' forces, throughout the entire post-war period, in order to fetter every industrial struggle in the iron chains of trade union legality, in order to disown every strike carried out in opposition to the trade union machine as a "world" strike, this playing off of organised against unorganised workers has, at the present time, still greater importance. By this method the trade union reformists are hoping to kill two birds with one stone—first, to hide their policy of dividing the working class and of coalition with the bourgeoisie, by presenting this policy as that of the class conscious and organised section of the proletariat, of its, so to speak, organised vanguard, as distinguished from the unorganised masses; and secondly, and this is more important, to use this method of splitting the organised and unorganised workers into two hostile camps. In order to create a real division between the "upper" and the "lower" sections, to draw the former into the system of trade union legality and bourgeois "moderate constitutionalism," thereby making impossible any attempt to change the industrial struggle of the working class into a political struggle using revolutionary methods. This will be managed, in complete harmony with all the principles of economic democracy, which regards the associations of organised producers and of employers as the only two organised forces of modern social progress, by every dispute between capital and labour being subjected to the arbitration of the bourgeois State. Such action on the part of the State will be hailed by the reformists as being "above class or Party," and thus excluding the necessity for a political struggle.

In practice this means that the so-called "free unions," in close association with the yellow Hirsch-Duncker and Christian unions, appear, as it were, as the upholders of the

principle of organisation within the working class against the "wild" actions of the unorganised workers, a principle they uphold in order to frustrate any revolutionary initiative on the part of the unorganised masses. Moreover, the fact that the change from industrial mass struggles to political struggles in the present period is becoming an ever more urgent problem, indicates the part that will be played by the unorganised masses. It may be taken as almost incontestable that the degree to which this change takes place will be measured by the degree to which the unorganised masses develop into an active, driving force during the course of the struggle. This, of course, does not in any way lessen the importance of the revolutionary sections of the proletariat organised in trade unions, nor does it lessen the importance of the work we must do to win over the social-democratic workers within the reformist unions. But these tasks can only be fulfilled if the Councils of Action determine under the leadership of the Communist Party and the trade union opposition to effect an independent organisation of the struggle, i.e., an organisation which goes beyond the limits of trade union legalism and bourgeois constitutionalism, which tries, by propaganda and organisation, to change the economic into a political struggle directed against both the reformist trade union bureaucracy and the bourgeois State as a whole.

Whoever does not understand this does not understand anything of the character of the struggle which is developing, and will be inclined to over-estimate the importance of "enrolling" the bureaucratic trade union apparatus in the struggle and to under-estimate the role of the unorganised workers, will regard the committees of action as "auxiliary bodies" in the struggle whose whole activity should be directed to winning "recognition" from the trade union bodies.

In this matter the conciliators, as "cowardly opportunists," are scarcely distinguished from the open liquidators, for they neither see nor wish to admit that under the particular conditions obtaining in the Ruhr struggle, the question of winning the masses through the militant leadership arose in a specific form and that, as far as the mobilisation of the unorganised workers is concerned, the old formula

of creating the united front from below, only through the lowest trade union bodies, no longer sufficed. In fact, the course of the Ruhr lock-out confronted the C.P.G., in its work of uniting organised and unorganised workers by a unified fighting leadership, with questions which could not be answered by the old formulæ, and there is no doubt that the Party and the revolutionary trade union opposition acted correctly in making it their chief task—this being in complete agreement with the decisions of the R.I.L.U. and Comintern Congresses—to place the conduct of the struggle in the hands of Councils of Action elected by all the locked-out workers and carrying on a sharp struggle against the treacherous trade union leaders. On this question the conciliators were untrue to their own opportunist nature, when they ridiculed the success of the Party in winning the unorganised workers, and described that success as bluff because the Party was not able to force a continuation of the struggle. They show quite clearly that they too adopt the attitude of the "labour aristocracy" which believes that the mobilisation of the unorganised workers has no real importance because only through the trade union struggle can the employers be forced to give way. They do not understand that the characteristic feature of the mass struggles now developing is to be sought in the fact that the unorganised sections of the working class are more quickly revolutionised than the organised. Nor do they understand that, because of this, the task of setting up an independent leadership in struggles must be carried out not only by drawing the trade union apparatus, even though it be only the apparatus of the subordinate bodies and committees, into the struggle, but, before all, by ensuring real revolutionary leadership of the struggle, by explaining to the workers that only their own power will give the victory over the employers and the reformists. The conciliators, just like the right, regard mass action from the point of view of winning the trade union machinery, declare that most important task of the struggle is to exercise pressure on the bosses, and in doing this they illustrate the real meaning of the decisions on the new tactics in the industrial struggle.

The question of the tactics employed in the Ruhr lock-out is of special importance to all our Parties, again, because it permits an examination of the line laid down by the Congresses. The C.P.G. has performed the valuable service of having used and tested the new forms of struggle laid down in the decisions of the Fourth R.I.L.U. Congress and the Sixth Comintern Congress. However many mistakes may have crept into the concrete, detailed carrying out of these decisions, one thing is clear—while the German Communist Party was acting, while it was organising the thousands of locked-out metal workers, on the basis of a really revolutionary tactic, under their own fighting leadership, hostile to the treacherous trade union bureaucracy, while, for the first time, it gained a firm footing in concentrated large-scale production by winning the unorganised workers, the right wingers were openly working as strike breakers, sending their adherents into the area of struggle to give the most shameful assistance to the social-democrats and trade union bureaucrats by supplying them with material intended to awaken distrust of the revolutionary leadership of the Ruhr struggle throughout the Party and the whole working class.

And the conciliators? Instead of fighting with the C.C. against the traitors in their own ranks, they declared that the most important duty was to fight both the right wing and the present "regime" in the Party.

So, while the Brandlerites refused to accept the decisions of the Sixth Congress and even went further and actually fought against them in practice, the conciliators, by their ambiguous position, really supported the right wingers in their struggle against the C.C.

It is clear from all the actions of the right that they approach nearer to the social-democrats every day and that they are more and more becoming an independent fraction within the C.P.G. The fact that they publish their own newspapers, leaflets, etc., the fact that they put forward their standpoint, deviating from that of the Comintern, at open meetings, shows this most clearly. The Open Letter of the Presidium is therefore absolutely correct in stating that the C.P.G. should no longer put up with the splitting activity of acceptance of the ultimatum formulated in the the right and in demanding the unqualified



resolution of the C.C. of the C.P.G. on December 14th.

Non-fulfilment of this demand will, of course, lead to the exclusion of the Brandlerites in Germany, and the refusal of Brandler and Thalheimer, the leaders of the right, to give an account of their splitting activities personally to the C.P.S.U. will have the same result. With regard to the conciliators, the Open Letter declares that they should make a definite break with the right and take up the struggle in a consistent manner under the leadership of the C.C. of the C.P.G.

The question of the complete destruction of the right fraction in the C.P.G., and of overcoming "conciliation," exhaustively discussed and answered in the Presidium's Open Letter, has, as we have remarked, tremendous importance for the whole Comintern.

The Open Letter shows how the right deviations, in certain circumstances, must, because it is opposed to Comintern policy, offer resistance to the Party and the Comintern, both ideologically and organisationally, as a separate fraction; and declares that the strictest organisational measures must be taken by the Party to combat it. Only such measures can preserve the capacity for action of our Communist movement. An essential condition for the liquidation of the right wingers in our ranks is, as the Presidium's Open Letter points out, a ruthless struggle against any attempt at reconciliation with them.

#### CONCLUSION

The Open Letter of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. deals with all those questions concerning the future internal development of the German C.P. with the necessary Bolshevik clarity. Now—and this is most important if there is to be clarity on the situation of the German Party and the dynamics of its future development—there can be no more talk of carrying out a policy of coalition of the forces in the Party, under the banner of so-called "concentration" in order to "normalise" relations within the Party. If the conciliators are the most zealous advocates of such "concentrations," they only show thereby that they deliberately refuse to see what has happened since the Sixth Congress and since the E.C.C.I.'s Open Letter of 6th October, 1928.

In the present circumstances of the struggle

against the right in Germany, requiring a ruthless suppression of conciliation, any such demand for the "concentration of forces" in the C.P.G. can only mean the creation of a "balance of power" system between two hostile tendencies in the Party; one, led by the C.C., represents the great majority of the Party, and takes a truly Leninist line, while the other consists of generals without an army, who, on any decisive point, vacillate now towards the right, now towards the Party and the Comintern. Such a balance of forces has obviously nothing in common with a truly Bolshevik concentration of forces, but is merely a transference into the ranks of the Communist Party, of the social-democratic policy of "organising Party opinion," of the system of "coalition of various tendencies." If the conciliators try to "concentrate" their attacks against the regime within the Party and against its C.C. on the pretext of such "concentration," they merely prove that they have learnt nothing from the events which have occurred in the last few months.

While the open Brandlerites have, to an ever increasing extent, opposed the decision of the Fourth R.I.L.U. and Sixth C.I. Congresses in order finally, on the pretext of the Wittorf case, to raise the standard of rebellion against the Party quite openly, the conciliators not only failed to join their efforts to those of the whole Party in the struggle against the right but have, as the Open Letter states, "become in the last two months more patient with the right and more impatient with the Party." They have replaced the Congress slogan of the fight on two fronts against the "right" and "left" by a new slogan of the fight on two fronts—against the right—in words—and against the policy of the C.C.—in fact, against the policy of the Party.

The conciliators can no longer deceive anybody with their demagogic speeches on the necessity of a new "concentration of forces." Or do they still seriously believe that there are honest revolutionary workers who will support their demand that the German Party and its C.C. should carry out a policy of "concentration" with those who, quite openly or otherwise, fight against the decisions of the R.I.L.U. and the C.I.? In a Communist Party there cannot and shall not be any "concentration" with liquidators or those who put

obstacles in the way of fighting the liquidators. The conciliators must take note of that once for all.

But perhaps the conciliators are so insistent upon the necessity of concentration, i.e., of coalition with the right, because they want to prove that without an agreement, without coalition, the Party cannot carry on the correct struggle against the right. This only shows that the conciliators still refuse to see the part they have played in that struggle. The whole activity of the Evert-Meyer group up to the present has given irrefutable proof that not only were they not "the strongest supporters" of the German Communist Party in the struggle against the Brandlerites, in the fight to carry out the Leninist policy of the R.I.L.U. and C.I., but that, on the contrary, they did everything to obstruct that struggle. That is why the Open Letter lays it down as one of the most essential tasks of the German Party to undertake "a systematic struggle to overcome the conciliation tendency, which obstructs the fight against the right." Only if it carries out that task will the German Party be able to put an end to all the vacillations and deviations which, really are nothing but an evasion of the growing class struggles, nothing but an attempt to run away from those struggles. Only on such conditions can the C.P.G. really march at the head of events, instead of being dragged along behind, as the conciliators would like, since they are still in favour of an ideological struggle only against the right wingers in the Party.

P.S.—We have just received the report that the leaders of the German right, Walcher, Fröhlich and others have not accepted the ultimatum presented to them by the C.C. of the German Party and ratified by the E.C.C.I. Presidium, and that they have therefore been expelled from the Party. The fact that the right rejected the demands in the ultimatum on the pretext that they wanted to "discuss" these demands collectively, again demonstrates that organisationally as well as ideologically, they have constituted themselves an independent Party wishing to deal with the C.P.G. and the Comintern as an "independent and equal power."

It only remains to add to the words of the Open Letter—"Brandler, Thalheimer and the other leaders of the right fraction have, by their political platform and their fractional activity, disclosed themselves as social-democratic politicians and have, objectively, become tools and agents of the reformists within the Communist Party,"—that from now on they will play their part, subjectively as well as objectively, outside the ranks of the Communist Party, hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder with all the renegades. Doubtless, too, their future development will lead them into the arms of the left social-democrats, into the social-democratic agency of the bourgeoisie, and will guide them into the ranks of those who begin by attacking the Comintern and end with a mad hatred of the U.S.S.R.

That is the objectively historical road for all those renegades who break away from the Communist International.





## Book Review

*Ten Years of New Germany*, by V. VOYTINSKY.

STATISTICS OF 1915-1925

A SHORT while ago a new book by the Menshevik emigré, Vladimir Voytinsky, "Ten Years of New Germany," was published. It contains statistics on area and population, the national economy and financial system, social policy, the housing system and political life for the last ten, and in some cases for the last forty, years (1882-1925). Since Germany is a country of the type which the programme of the Communist International describes as of "highly developed capitalism," Mr. Voytinsky's statistical tables enable us to examine, in the light of objective figures, whether and to what degree the tendencies of development in Germany confirm what the Programme of the C.I. declares to be the tendencies of development in capitalism generally.

The internal structure of capitalism in the period of imperialism—i.e., of declining capitalism—says our programme, changes because the technical and economic advantages of large-scale production lead, in the competitive struggle, to the destruction of pre-capitalist economic forms and to the greater and greater concentration and centralisation of capital. This general law, however, works out differently for industry and for agriculture. We shall examine both in reference to Voytinsky's figures.

In the sphere of industry we see that, despite the tremendous mutilation of Germany by the "Allied" imperialists, there is a very great growth in productive forces. The territory ceded by Germany meant a loss of 15.7 per cent. of her former coal production, 48.2 per cent. of iron ore production, 58.8 per cent. zinc, 25.6 per cent. lead, 22.6 per cent. blast furnace production, 20.9 per cent. cast iron production, 17.5 per cent. welded iron production, 59.4 per cent. zinc work production, 20.2 per cent. lead works production.\* In addition there was the loss of production in the Saar district and of the sources of raw materials in the colonies.

During the years of inflation German industry renewed and extended her technical equipment. If the difference in the auditing methods of working costs in 1907 and 1925 are considered, it is seen that the output capacity of power machines in German industry in that period increased on the average by 183.7 per cent., and in some industries by 300 per cent. and more (e.g., in iron and metal production, machinery and transport construction, the chemical industry, rubber and asbestos production, the electro-technical industry, and in medical and optical instruments—in the last there was an increase of 740 per cent!). In addition electrification, so characteristic of modern economic development, shows very great progress, for in 1907 scarcely 25 per cent. of primary motors were worked on electricity, while in 1925 the percentage was 66. In more or less the same period, that is, from 1910 to 1922, Germany's most powerful capitalist competitor, the U.S.A., increased its use of primary motors in industry by 60 per cent.

The co-efficient of electrification (electrical energy as a percentage of total energy) was in 1923 no higher in the U.S.A. than in Germany, amounting to 67.1 per cent. (In 1909 it was the same as in Germany, 25.6 per cent.)\*

The economic development of Germany in the last decade—as in the previous one—shows above all a continual growth in the role of industry in national economy. In 1882, 33.8 per cent. of all occupied persons were engaged in industry and manufacture; in 1895, 37.8 per cent.; in 1907, 40 per cent.; and in 1925, 41.3 per cent. Industry showed the greatest proportional increase in numbers employed. The latter total rose by 17,743,000 between 1882, when it was 18,110,000, and 1925, and industry took 7,537,000 of these, or 41 per cent.

What do the figures show with regard to those changes in the structure of industry of which our programme speaks? What is the

\* V. Voytinsky. "The World in Figures." Vol. IV, pp. 56-83

\* All percentages according to values.

relation between large and small concerns in Germany? Voytinsky maintains, on the basis of the most recent statistics, that the movement towards concentration in industry, which has been going on very rapidly in Germany for a long time, has in the last few years been developing particularly rapidly. Up to 1907 small concerns (employing up to five persons) had been declining both relatively and absolutely (from 2,176,000 concerns employing 3,270,000 persons in 1882 to 1,760,000 concerns employing 3,048,000 persons in 1907); between 1907 and 1925 the number of concerns and the number employed (within the present German realm) remained practically the same (decreasing to 1,614,000 concerns employing 2,837,000 persons), but their percentage share in production continued to decline. Middle-sized concerns (employing from six to 50 persons) increased slowly, but steadily in number. But while in 1907 both these types employed more than the large concerns—5.1 as against 4.7 millions—in 1925 the respective figures were 5.7 as against nearly seven million in large concerns. The percentages of the industrial population employed in large scale concerns were as follows: 1882, 26 per cent.; 1895, 34 per cent.; 1907, 48 per cent.; 1925, 55 per cent. Very large works, employing 1,000 or more, amounted in 1895 to 248 with 430,000 employees, in 1907 to 548 with 1,218,000 employees (on the present area basis, 504 with 1,176,000 employees) and in 1925 to 892 with 2,109,000 employees. Heavy industry has the highest degree of concentration—mining and associated works, in which the number of concerns decreased by 17.5 per cent. between 1907 and 1925, while the number employed increased by 57.4 per cent.; iron and metal production, the chemical industry, in which, during the same period, the number of concerns rose by 19.9 per cent., and the number employed by 59.9 per cent. Machine construction, the electro-technical and textile industries are also highly concentrated. In the latter two the degree of concentration also increased greatly from 1907 to 1925 (in the electro-technical, tool and instrument industries the number of concerns increased by 120.7 per cent. and the number employed by 231.8 per cent.; in the textile industry the first decreased by 2.3 per cent. and the latter increased by 17.7 per cent.). As a whole, the

number of concerns increased by 1.9 per cent. between 1907 and 1925, and the number employed increased by 26.8 per cent. Another extremely interesting fact. In 1907 1,953,000 persons working all together 18.5 million hours per day, were employed in mining, iron and metal production, machine construction and in the electrical and chemical industries, while in 1925 there were 3,522,000 employed working 28.2 million hours. In the production of consumptive goods—in the manufacture of iron, steel and metal goods, in the textile and paper industries, in the leather and linoleum, food and clothing industries, the number employed rose from 4,862,000 to 5,684,000 but the number of hours worked daily fell from 46.2 to 45.4 million. Thus, although almost all the new workers coming into industry found employment in industries manufacturing production goods, the most important industries producing articles of consumption were able, with reduced human labour power, but with improved machinery, to satisfy the demands made on them. Another striking confirmation of the Marxian thesis, expressed in the C.I. programme, that capitalist development is towards an increasing organic composition of capital.\*

Even greater than the growth in the technical concentration of industrial capital has been that of financial and economic concentration, on which Voytinsky's figures shed a bright light. More than one-third of the total share capital of the 12,000 limited companies which existed in Germany in 1927, with a total share capital of 21.5 milliard marks, is held by 60 huge undertakings owning 7.4 milliard of capital. These include industrial undertakings as well as large banks, particularly the three "D" banks. The "octopuses," the International Dyestuffs Corporation, whose activity extends to mining, chemicals, foundries, the electro-technical and textile industries, and the United Steel Works, an amalgamation of the Rhine-Elbe Union, the Phoenix and Thyssen concerns, which controls the whole of German heavy industry, possess respectively 1.1 and 0.8 milliard marks share

\* We shall not here deal with the striking confirmation of the policy of our Party in the Soviet Union afforded by the facts referred to above. The German statistics for the last few years will be the basis of a special examination devoted to that point.



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capital. On October 31st, 1927 there were about 300 concerns combining 2,106 limited companies controlling about 62 per cent. of the whole share capital of Germany. In particular they controlled the whole potash industry, 99.6 per cent. of the share capital of concerns connected with mining; 95.4 per cent. of house coal mining; 90.1 per cent. of mining, and 88.5 per cent. of the capital in the iron and metal production industries!

This is a sufficient indication of the tendencies in industrial development, and also confirms the corresponding theses of our programme. Now as to agriculture.

Here the law of the concentration and centralisation of capital is apparent not only in the differentiation of the peasantry and their proletarianisation, but more obviously in open and concealed methods of the subjection of the small peasants to capitalism. They can only preserve the appearance of independence at the cost of extreme exertion and systematic underconsumption. This is indicated by the fact that the share of agriculture in the national income is much lower than its proportions of labour power employed (income 20 per cent. and proportion of total working population employed in agriculture, 30.5 per cent.), and again by the fact that the number of family members working as assistants—partly on account of the housing shortage and unemployment in the towns—has increased greatly and amounts to 52 per cent. of all workers employed in agriculture (in industry and manufacture the corresponding figure is only 1.7 per cent.); of these more than 16 per cent. are the unskilled and economically less valuable members of the family, i.e., women. Other figures point in the same direction. The number of small and medium farms is growing, but this increase is mainly due to an extension in the very small holdings, and the average size of the holding has decreased from 0.6 hectares in 1907 to 0.5 in 1925; the smaller the holding, the greater the exploitation of the family (in very many cases of holdings under five hectares the number of family members amounts to 56.1 to 61.6 per cent. of the total employed, while in large farms it is from 0.9 to 13.8 per cent.). These small holdings are very inadequately equipped with machinery, cattle and artificial manures; of 8,552 mechanical ploughs, farms up to 10 hectares

possessed only 188, and have only 2.1 to 9.0 horses per 100 hectares, while the larger farms have from 13 to 16.9

From these dominating tendencies in agricultural development arise those tendencies in social development pointed out in our programme and statistically proved by the figures of the last ten years development in Germany, greater employment of women and child labour, increasing proletarianisation of small holders and intensification of class contradictions. Even though the statistics of the class state place these phenomena in the worst light, Voytinsky makes many most instructive disclosures.

In industry the degree of proletarianisation increased from 81.2 per cent. in 1907 to 84.9 per cent. in 1925 and in trade and commerce from 64.7 to 69.4 per cent. During the same time the percentage of non-manual workers in the total working population increased enormously, mainly in the employment of female labour (from 7.7 out of 56.7 per cent. in 1907 to 12.9 out of 60.7 per cent. in 1925). In agriculture the degree of proletarianisation has fallen owing mainly to the replacement of outside labour by labour supplied by the members of the family (from 33.7 to 28.4 per cent.); the wife and child have become the paid workers of their own paterfamilias.

Between 1913 and 1918 unemployment among trade unionists varied from 1 to 7.2 per cent., between 1919 and 1922 from 1.5 to 3.8 per cent. Then came 1923, the "Black Year," with its "stabilisation crisis" and the "ration-alisation crisis" of 1925-1926. Within a few months unemployment among trade unionists\* increased tremendously—to more than 20 per cent. totally unemployed (between November, 1923, and February, 1924, it varied from 23.4 to 28.2 per cent.), and more than 40 per cent. on short time (varying between 42.0 and 47.3 per cent. in the same period). The percentage of completely and partly unemployed never fall below 6.5 per cent.

#### INCREASING RATE OF EXPLOITATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

Two series of figures will throw sufficient light on this.

\* Only one third of the German workers are organised in Trade Unions. Since 1920-22 "free" Unions have lost 45 per cent. of their membership.



After the two crises of 1923-1926, the total wealth of the 3,021 limited companies surveyed by the National Statistical Bureau amounted to 26.1 milliard marks. For the business year 1925-26 they made 657 million marks net profit or 3.76 per cent. on their capital, while for 1926-27 the profits were 881 million or 4.98 per cent. net profit. On the other hand the real wages of skilled printers fell in September, 1923, to 38 per cent. of pre-war wages. That of metal workers to 54 per cent., that of building workers to 63 per cent. In 1924 and 1925, according to Voytinsky, increases in wages were much less than increases in the cost of living; in 1926, in spite of further increases in the cost of living, wages remained practically the same, while in 1927 "the wages of unskilled workers were slightly higher than in 1913 and the wages of skilled workers had scarcely exceeded that level."\* That is, at one extreme the accumulation of wealth and power, at the other hunger and wretchedness!

This contradiction is expressed—however weakly—in labour disputes. The annual average number of strikes for the period 1909—1913 was 2,171, affecting 7,998 concerns employing 537,000 workers. The number of working days lost per year was, on the average, 6.3 million. These figures were greatly exceeded in the years of revolution and "strike fever," in 1919—1922. The number of strikes doubled (1922—4,348); the number of concerns affected was seven times as great (1921—52,244); the number of workers involved five times as great (1919—2,725,000), and the number of working days lost also five times as high (1919—3.2 million). This was followed by an ebb in the wave of strikes; 1926, the year of rationalisation, that is, of the uttermost exploitation and distress, coupled

with increased pressure from the reformist Trade Union machine, and of "arbitration"—that year marks the lowest point in the movement, unknown in the pre-war period, with 316 strikes affecting 1,903 concerns and 85,000 workers and involving a loss of less than 0.9 million working days. At the same time—and this must be particularly emphasised as the most overwhelming proof of base treachery towards the proletariat on the part of "industrial peace" Trade Union bureaucrats—lockouts increased continuously from 1923 to 1926, reaching a hitherto unparalleled extent. In 1924 (the crest of the movement), there were 392 lockouts affecting 11,003 concerns and involving 1,096,000 workers and a loss of 22.8 million working days (yearly average 1909—13: 425 lockouts affecting 4,731 concerns, 174,000 workers and a loss of 4.9 million working days). 1927 showed a much happier state of affairs. The number of strikes and strikers was more than double that of 1926, the number of lockouts and workers locked out fell. Everything points to the present year (1928) being shown in the statistics to be one of a great intensification of the class struggle on both sides. The era of "bridging over" class contradictions by the cunning and treacherous practices of the social-democrats and trade union bureaucracy, is, to all appearances, at the beginning of its end.

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\* The responsibility for these—as for all other—figures, lies entirely with Mr. Voytinsky.

Z. LEDER

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